

Gospel Theology



Message about God: Reconciling mercy and justice

“Man’s alienation from God should be presented in light of the apparent conflict or contradiction between God’s mercy and his justice, God’s love and his law. The problem is that God must act in a way that expresses both his mercy and his justice. On the one hand God would be unjust if he simply cleared guilty people. On the other hand God hates to see sinners condemned. The Bible teaches that God hates the death of a sinner, but also sworn that the soul that sins must die.” *Dr. Steven Childers*

Exodus 34:6-7

⁶ And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, “The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, ⁷ maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation.”

- How can God justly punish sin and at the same time show his mercy to unrighteous people?
- How can God be justified in pardoning sinful humans while still being just and righteous in his character?
- How can God be a fair and just judge by not sentencing every eternally guilty sinner to an eternal punishment?

Further Reflection

Justice of God

What do we learn about God from these verses?

- Ezekiel 18:4
- Deuteronomy 32:4
- Job 34:12
- Psalm 89:14
- Psalm 98:9

Mercy of God

What do we learn about God from these verses?

- Ezekiel 33:11
- Lamentations 3:22-23
- Psalm 103:4-5
- Psalm 103:11-12

Romans 1:16-17

¹⁶ For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. ¹⁷ For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “BUT THE RIGHTEOUS *man* SHALL LIVE BY FAITH.”

- How does the gospel reveal that God is righteous, acting rightly, acting justly in accordance with his holy character?
- How does the gospel bring together God’s justice in condemning sin and his mercy in saving people?

Romans 3:21-26

²¹ But now apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, ²² even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction; ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; ²⁵ whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed; ²⁶ for the demonstration, *I say*, of His righteousness at the present time, so that He would be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

- How does this passage explain that God is just in forgiving sinful people?
- How does God effectively deal with sin yet at the same time maintain his righteous character? What are the elements involved in salvation?

Message about God: Reconciling mercy and justice

Introduction:

Justice of God

- Ezekiel 18:4
⁴ For every living soul belongs to me, the father as well as the son—both alike belong to me. The soul who sins is the one who will die.
- Deuteronomy 32:4
⁴ He is the Rock, his works are perfect, and all his ways are just. A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is he.
- Job 34:12
¹² It is unthinkable that God would do wrong, that the Almighty would pervert justice.
- Psalm 89:14
¹⁴ Righteousness and justice are the foundation of your throne; love and faithfulness go before you.
- Psalm 98:9
⁹ let them sing before the LORD, for he comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world in righteousness and the peoples with equity.

Mercy of God

- Ezekiel 33:11
¹¹ Say to them, ‘As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign LORD, I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that they turn from their ways and live. Turn! Turn from your evil ways! Why will you die, O house of Israel?’
- Lamentations 3:22-23
²² Because of the LORD’s great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. ²³ They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.
- Psalm 103:4-5
⁴ who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion, ⁵ who satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagle’s.
- Psalm 103:11-12
¹¹ For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him; ¹² as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.

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Notes on the text

Romans 3:21-26

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Justified through Christ (3:21-26)

[Romans 1:18-3:20](#) was enough to make anyone worried. Righteousness never comes through lawkeeping because people just don't keep God's commands ([3:20](#), [23](#)). Therefore, the wrath of God is being revealed. But now, having made his readers "conscious of sin" ([3:20](#)), Paul turns to the good news: "in the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed" ([1:17](#)). Read [3:21-31](#), noting in the margin any words or ideas you don't understand. Look them up in an English or Bible dictionary if the study guide doesn't explain them.

The Law and the Prophets ([3:21](#)). The whole Old Testament. [Genesis 15:6](#); [Psalm 32:1-2](#); and [Habakkuk 2:4](#) all testify to this truth.

Glory of God ([3:23](#)). "What God intended man to be. The glory that man had before the fall" ([Genesis 1:26-28](#); [Psalm 8:5-6](#); [Ephes. 4:24](#)).

Justified ([3:24](#)). Declared righteous, not guilty. The guilty person's sins are declared to be paid in full, so he has a clear record before God.

Redemption ([3:24](#)). Release by payment of a ransom. The image is of someone freeing a slave by buying him from his master, or someone paying a criminal's fine to release him from jail.

Sacrifice of atonement ([3:25](#)). "Propitiation" in kjv, nasb. "Expiation" in rsv. The penalty for sin (rebellion against God's will) is death ([Romans 6:23](#)), but God does not want sinners to die. The Old Testament sacrificial system was designed to illuminate both God's just hatred of sin and His merciful desire not to punish. God allowed men to kill animals in place of themselves. These sacrifices "atoned for" (covered) sin, "expiated" (removed) man's guilt, and "propitiated" (satisfied, appeased) God's justice. See [Leviticus 16:11, 15-16, 20-22](#).

[Romans 3:25b-26](#) explains that those Old Testament sacrifices were not sufficient payment for sin in themselves, but they were sufficient in that they represented what Christ was going to do. By putting faith in the sacrifices commanded to cleanse sin, the Israelites were putting faith in God's way of righteousness which is fully revealed in Christ. Thus, the sacrificial law testifies to God's way of righteousness by faith apart from works ([3:21](#)). Now, however, the sacrificial system is ended because the act it foreshadowed has occurred.

His blood ([3:25](#)). The sacrificial animal's shed blood signified the life that was being given up for the person's sin. Likewise, Christ's blood signifies the life He poured out for our sin and the death He accepted in our place.

Justification is a concept from the law courts. *Redemption* is from the slave market. *Atonement* is from the Temple.

Potential Questions for Discussion: Rom 3:21-26

Observation and Interpretation Questions

1. What new righteousness has been made known? ([3:21](#))
2. What previous indication was there about the existence of the new righteousness? ([3:21](#))
3. What is the source of our righteousness? ([3:22](#))
4. How does a person obtain righteousness? ([3:22](#))
5. What heritage do you share with every person who has ever lived? ([3:23](#))
6. What justifies us in God's sight? ([3:24](#))
7. What is the cost or price of justification with God? ([3:24](#))
8. What did God do to provide a means of justification and forgiveness for every person? ([3:25](#))
9. How does providing Christ Jesus as a sacrifice demonstrate the justice of God? ([3:25-26](#))
10. On what basis can a person brag about his or her righteousness? ([3:27](#))
11. What justifies a person in God's sight? ([3:28](#))
12. How will Jews and Gentiles be judged by God? ([3:29-30](#))
13. What is the relationship between having faith and observing the Law? ([3:29-31](#))

Application Questions

14. What makes it difficult for many of us to believe that we can gain God's forgiveness by faith in Christ alone?
15. What makes Christianity good news in our world?
16. What makes Christianity good news for you personally?
17. Why would God offer His righteousness free to every person?
18. What do we need to do to be declared righteous in God's sight?
19. What does it mean to believe and put your faith in Jesus Christ?
20. Why do some people object to the idea that God has offered forgiveness to every person, even the worst sinners?
21. When could you meet with another person to share the good news of God's redemptive plan?
22. In what areas are you still boasting about your own abilities? How can you submit those areas to God's control?

Other

- In your own words, explain how Jesus has enabled us to become righteous if we put our faith in Him ([3:24-25](#)).
(Consider: How does Jesus' death "redeem" us and "atone" for our sin?)
- Why is the phrase "freely by his grace" ([3:24](#)) important?

Romans 3:21-26 (The Message)

²¹ **B**ut in our time something new has been added. What Moses and the prophets witnessed to all those years has happened. ²² The God-setting-things-right that we read about has become Jesus-setting-things-right for us. And not only for us, but for everyone who believes in him. For there is no difference between us and them in this. ²³ Since we've compiled this long and sorry record as sinners (both us and them) and proved that we are utterly incapable of living the glorious lives God wills for us, ²⁴ God did it for us. Out of sheer generosity he put us in right standing with himself. A pure gift. He got us out of the mess we're in and restored us to where he always wanted us to be. And he did it by means of Jesus Christ. ²⁵ God sacrificed Jesus on the altar of the world to clear that world of sin. Having faith in him sets us in the clear. God decided on this course of action in full view of the public—to set the world in the clear with himself through the sacrifice of Jesus, finally taking care of the sins he had so patiently endured. ²⁶ This is not only clear, but it's *now*—this is current history! God sets things right. He also makes it possible for us to live in his rightness.

Message about God: His passion to be glorified

“The Gospel is a message about God. It tells us who he is, what his character is, what his standards are, and what he requires of us, his creatures. It tells us that we owe our very existence to him, that for good or ill we are always in his hands and under his eye, and that **he made us to worship and serve him, to show forth his praise and to live for his glory.**” J.I. Packer, *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God*.

Gospel: God restoring us to our original purpose—glorifying him

1) God created us for _____.

"Bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the ends of the earth,... whom I created for my glory" Isaiah 43:6-7

What is the purpose God created people? What is significant about this?

2) _____ should live for God's glory

"So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God" 1 Corinthians 10:31

3) All of us have _____ to glorify God as we should and are subject to just condemnation.

"All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" Romans 3:23

What does it mean to "fall short of the glory of God?"

"The wages of sin is death..." Romans 6:23

4) God sent Jesus to provide _____ to those who trust in him

"Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God" John 1:12

"This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent." John 17:3

"I came that they may have life, and have *it* abundantly." John 10:10

5) We are restored to our _____ : to enjoy and glorify God forever!

God has provided Christ, who has restored the relationship between God and his people. Now, believers can live fully for his name and renown, without sin hindering this purpose for man. Through Christ, God has restored people to their intended purpose—to enjoy and glorify God forever! (Rev 5:9-10) Adapted from *Quest for Joy*, John Piper

Revelation 5:9-14

⁹ And they sang a new song: "You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, because you were slain, and with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. ¹⁰ You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth." ¹¹ Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders. ¹² In a loud voice they sang: "Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!" ¹³ Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, singing: "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!" ¹⁴ The four living creatures said, "Amen," and the elders fell down and worshipped.

How does this passage show the ideas of the 6 points above?

- A unique gospel presentation in 5 verses: Isaiah 43:6-7; 1 Cor. 10:31; Romans 3:23; John 10:10; Rev. 5:9-10



Introduction:

“The Gospel is a message about God. It tells us who he is, what his character is, what his standards are, and what he requires of us, his creatures. It tells us that we owe our very existence to him, that for good or ill we are always in his hands and under his eye, and that **he made us to worship and serve him, to show forth his praise and to live for his glory.**” J.I. Packer, *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God*.

Gospel is about God restoring our original purpose—glorifying him forever!

1) God created us for his glory

"Bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the ends of the earth,... whom I created for my glory" (Isaiah 43:6-7)

God made us to magnify his greatness - the way telescopes magnify stars. He created us to put his goodness and truth and beauty and wisdom and justice on display. The greatest display of God's glory comes from deep delight in all that he is. This means that God gets the praise and we get the pleasure. God created us so that he is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in him.

What is the purpose God created people? What is significant about this?

2) Every human should live for God's glory

"So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God" (1 Corinthians 10:31).

If God made us for his glory, it is clear that we should live for his glory. Our duty comes from his design. So our first obligation is to show God's value by being satisfied with all that he is for us.

3) All of us have failed to glorify God as we should and are subject to just condemnation

"All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).

What does it mean to "fall short of the glory of God?"

"The wages of sin is death..." (Romans 6:23).

5) God sent Jesus to provide eternal life and joy to those who trust in him

"Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God" John 1:12

"This is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent." John 17:3

"I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly." John 10:10

6) Therefore we are restored to our original purpose: to enjoy and glorify God forever!

God has provided Christ, who has restored the relationship between God and his people. Now, believers can live fully for his name and renown, without sin hindering this purpose for man. Through Christ, God has restored people to their intended purpose—to enjoy and glorify God forever!

Adapted from Quest for Joy, John Piper

Revelation 5:9-14 (NIV)

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Discussion: How does this passage show the ideas of the 6 points above?

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Message about Sin: How great is our debt, and how deeply does it pervade?

“The gospel is a message about sin. It tells us how we have fallen short of God’s standard; how we have become guilty, filthy, and helpless in sin, and now stand under the wrath of God. It tells us that the reason why we sin continually is that we are sinners by nature, and that nothing we do, or try to do, for ourselves can put us right, or bring us back into God’s favor. It shows us ourselves as God sees us, and teaches us to think of ourselves as God thinks of us. Thus it leads us to self despair. And this also is a necessary step. Not till we have learned our need to get right with God, and our inability to do so by any effort of our own, can we come to know the Christ who saves us from sin.”

J.I. Packer, *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God*, p. 59

Where it all Began

Read Gen 3:1-6: How is the serpent depicted in the story? What is his strategy? How does he execute it?
Read Genesis 2:15-17 and compare it’s accuracy to Eve’s response to Satan about the tree.

Read Genesis 3:7-13:

What is the impact on Adam and Eve’s relationship with one another and with God?

How do you see these same affects playing out in our lives, and the lives of those around us?

Our condition after the fall

From the following passages, write down the key words and phrases that define our condition before God:
Eph 2:1-3 Rom 2:4-5 Rom 8:7-8 Isa 64:6 Gen 6:5

Further Reflection

“Sin is the dare of God’s justice, the rape of his mercy, the jeer of his patience, the slight of his power and the contempt of his love.” John Bunyan, *Gathered Gold*, p. 291

“The impact of the fall on mankind is two-fold: 1) moral guilt and 2) moral corruption. Sinful man is not only under sin’s penalty but also under sin’s power. Sin is not only a legal problem but, at its core, it is a relational problem of an idolatrous heart-trying to find life in something or someone besides God. Sinful man is not only under God’s wrath but also under the dominion of sin (world, flesh, and the devil). Fallen man needs not only judicial pardon but also freedom from sin’s power and moral cleansing.” Horatius Bonar, *The Everlasting Righteousness*, preface

“Man, by his fall into a state of sin, hath wholly lost all ability of will to any spiritual good accompanying salvation; so as a natural man, being altogether averse from good, and dead in sin, is not able, by his own strength, to convert himself, or to prepare himself thereunto.” Westminster Confession (IX, 3).

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Message about Sin: How great is our debt, and how deeply does it pervade?

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Where it all Began

Read Gen 3:1-6:

How is the serpent depicted in the story? What is his strategy? How does he execute it?

He is malevolent and wiser than humans, bringing them under his rule. He knows divine matters and uses speech to introduce confusion...Satan's craftiness is seen in his cunning distortion of God's words. With subtle guise, the adversary speaks as a winsome angelic theologian...Satan smoothly maneuvers Eve into what may appear as a sincere theological discussion, but he subverts obedience and distorts perspective by emphasizing God's prohibition, not his provision, reducing God's command to a question, doubting his sincerity, defaming his motives, and denying the truthfulness of his threat...He wants God's word to appear harsh and restrictive."

Read Genesis 2:15-17 and compare it's accuracy to Eve's response to Satan about the tree. How does this speak to our lives today?

Satan knows God's word...and he twists it...we need to know God's word...we need to think rightly of God.

Where do you see subtle demonic deception in our world today? In what ways are you tempted to privilege human reason over divine revelation? In what ways are you tempted to view God as harsh, restrictive, and oppressive? Why is it important to study theology? What are the inherent dangers?

Read Genesis 3:7-13:

What is the impact on Adam and Eve's relationship with one another and with God?

How do you see these same affects playing out in our lives, and the lives of those around us?

How do you see this in your families, relationships, in the media, on a global scale?

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Message about Idolatry: What are you worshipping?

"The ultimate reason for any sin is that something besides Christ is functioning as an alternative "righteousness" (place to find life) or source of confidence—and is thus an "idol", a pseudo-savior, which creates inordinate desires." Tim Keller *"Gospel-Renewal"*

"The reason our hearts are not more transformed is because we have allowed..."The affections of the heart" to be captured by idols that steal our heart affection away from God." Steven Childers *"True-Spirituality"*

"An idol today is something from which we get our identity. An idol is making something or someone other than Jesus Christ our true source of happiness and fulfillment" Steve Childers *"True Spirituality"*

Idolatry and Water

Be appalled at this, O heavens, and shudder with great horror," declares the LORD. ¹³"My people have committed two sins: They have forsaken me, the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water. Jer 2:12-13

Come up with 6-8 observations from this passage, here are a few questions to help guide you as you process

- What are the two sins they've committed?
- What are the differences between a broken cistern and a spring of living water?
- Remember that John 4 story we learned, how does that relate to this and idolatry?

Further Reflections: Locating Idols

 Answer the following diagnostic questions:

- What causes you consistently the greatest anxiety? What is it that causes you to become angry?
- What is my greatest nightmare? / What, if I failed or lost it, would cause me to feel that I did not even want to live? What keeps me going / Who do I think most easily about? What does my mind go to when I am free? / What makes me feel the most self-worth? / What prayer, unanswered, would make me seriously think about turning away from God?

Are there any common themes? Write below what things tend to be too important to you?

Fighting Idolatry

God promises to save those who believe in Christ from sin's domineering power over their lives by freely giving them a new heart (desires) and a new Spirit to empower them to know God, honor Him and enjoy Him forever. Although you can never be free from sin's ongoing influence until heaven, God promises through Christ to deliver you from sin's domineering power today.

Repentance

"From that time on Jesus began to preach, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near." Matt 4:17

- **"When our Lord and Master Jesus Christ said "Repent (Matt 4:17) he willed the entire life of believers to be one of repentance"**
Martin Luther

Faith

"Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God." Col 3:1-2

- **Repentance is turning our affections away from idols, and faith is turning our hearts affections on Christ**

"Some of us are obsessed with gaining approval, or recognition. Others are obsessed with experiencing comfort or pleasure or happiness. Some are obsessed with gaining control or power or possessions or building a reputation or gaining success as the world defines it. The apostle Paul was also obsessed. But his obsession was with Christ and the cross...Only when Jesus Christ becomes more attractive to us than the pleasures of our sin will our hearts ever be set free. The enslaving power of sin will never dissipate until a greater affection of the heart replaces it." Steve Childers, *"True Spirituality"*

Leader Guide

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Further Reflections: Locating Idols

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Gospel Impact

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Faith “Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.” Col 3:1-2

- **Repentance is turning our affections away from idols, and faith is turning our hearts affections on Christ**

“Some of us are obsessed with gaining approval, or recognition. Others are obsessed with experiencing comfort or pleasure or happiness. Some are obsessed with gaining control or power or possessions or building a reputation or gaining success as the world defines it. The apostle Paul was also obsessed. But his obsession was with Christ and the cross...Only when Jesus Christ becomes more attractive to us than the pleasures of our sin will our hearts ever be set free. The enslaving power of sin will never dissipate until a greater affection of the heart replaces it.” Steve Childers, “*True Spirituality*”

1. External sin vs. root sin..1st quote
2. What comes to mind when you think of the word Idol...or idolatry?
 - 1Kings 11:7, 2 Chron 33:7, Isa 40:19

2. read the 3rd quote...what is that saying...

- *God made us to worship, and we are always worshipping something whether we realize it or not, that is why the first commandment, is you shall have no other gods, and the second is like it...not make any images to worship God...*

3. Read the second quote, what is that saying...

4. Ex: Steve Childers, talks about his constant struggle with anxiety, to his surprise he discovered that at his core was not primarily the external sin of worry but the internal, idolatrous ins of seeking the approval of others as the source of his wrath

- Read Col 3:5, 1 John 5:21

5. Look up Jer 2:12-13, a cistern was a place where people in the desert would store rain water, it was the most important substance....talk about in your groups what this picture is illustrating

6. Locating idols, take a few moments and read through these questions...record observations...

- If only I had ____ then I would matter

7. Chariots of Fire

Chariots of Fire, movie in 1981, a true story of True British men Harold Abrams and Eric Liddle, who won Gold medals 1924 paris Olympics. Eric Liddle went on to be a missionary in China and died in a detention camp in WW2.

Everytime Eric, a world class runner ran, he always with his face straight up to the sky and his mouth wide open and his face to the sky, running like a crazy man.

He was worshipping. Because Harold Abrams and Eric Liddle both had there minds set on the same thing. They wanted to run, and they wanted to win a race. But for totally different reasons.

When Harold Abrams is asked why he’s running he says this: “When that gun goes off I’ve got 10 seconds to justify my existence” If I can win this race, I can no I matter.

Eric Liddle says to his sister “Jenny God made me fast, and when I run I feel his pleasure.”

One guy is running to praise his savior, and another who is running to becoming of his own savior.

The other guy is running in grinding anxiety, trying to prove that he matters. While Eric is running, and if he wins its icing on the cake.

Harold Abrams, he finds it unsatisfying, even though he wins.

8. Repentance and Faith

- Read quote
- Usually think of it as a one-time thing...but when he calls us to repent he is calling us not to beat up on ourselves, or merely to clean up our lives, but to a radical change of heart...remember our root problem is not external but internal
- When we see the depth of our sin, then we’ll rejoice in Jesus
- Col 3:1-2– talks about faith...through faith we are always placing affections on Christ...

9. What are some practical ways that we can turn from sin, and some practical ways to turn our hearts on Christ...



Message about Christ: The Lamb of God

OT Picture: Day of Atonement

Read Leviticus 16

Two Lambs:

Propitiate: Sins atoned for by _____

Expiate: Sins taken away by _____

Sacrifice: Christ's fulfillment

Sins laid on Christ

Isaiah 53:4-6,12

⁴ Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. ⁵ But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. ⁶ We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. ¹² Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

Christ offered own blood

Hebrews 9:11-15

¹¹ When Christ came as high priest of the good things that are already here, he went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle that is not man-made, that is to say, not a part of this creation. ¹² He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption. ¹³ The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkled on those who are ceremonially unclean sanctify them so that they are outwardly clean. ¹⁴ How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God! ¹⁵ For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance—now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant.

Scapegoat: Christ's fulfillment: sins are taken away

Sins _____

John 1:29

²⁹ The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!... Hebrews 9:27-28 ²⁷ Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment, ²⁸ so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.

Sins _____

Micah 7:19

¹⁹ You will again have compassion on us; you will tread our sins underfoot and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea.

Sins _____

Isaiah 43:25

²⁵ "I, even I, am he who blots out your transgressions, for my own sake, and remembers your sins no more.



Future of the Lamb of God

Rev 7:14-17

¹⁴ I answered, "Sir, you know." And he said, "These are they who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. ¹⁵ Therefore, "they are before the throne of God and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will spread his tent over them. ¹⁶ Never again will they hunger; never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat upon them, nor any scorching heat. ¹⁷ For the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd; he will lead them to springs of living water. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.

Rev 22:1-5

Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb ² down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. ³ No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him. ⁴ They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. ⁵ There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever.



Message about Christ: The Lamb of God LEADER

OT Picture: Day of Atonement Read Leviticus 16

Two Lambs:

Propitiate: Sins atoned for by SACRIFICE

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Message about Christ: Justification

JUSTIFICATION Regarded as not guilty—counted righteous in God’s sight through Christ.

OT Picture

Micah 7:8-9

Though I have fallen, I will rise. Though I sit in darkness, the LORD will be my light. ⁹Because I have sinned against him, I will bear the LORD’s wrath, until he pleads my case and establishes my right. He will bring me out into the light; I will see his righteousness.

In Christ we have righteousness of God.

2 Cor 5:21

He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

1. Justified _____

Gal 2:15-16

¹⁵“We who are Jews by birth and not ‘Gentile sinners’ ¹⁶know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified.

2. Justified _____

Romans 6:7-8

⁵If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. ⁶For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin— ⁷because anyone who has died has been freed from sin. ⁸Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him.

3. Justified _____

Romans 5:1-2

Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ²through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.

4. Justification _____

Romans 5:15-19

¹⁵But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God’s grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many! ¹⁶Again, the gift of God is not like the result of the one man’s sin: The judgment followed one sin and brought condemnation, but the gift followed many trespasses and brought justification. ¹⁷For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God’s abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ. ¹⁸Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men. ¹⁹For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.

The future of Justification

Justification is part of the unbreakable chain to glorification

Rom 8:29-30

²⁹For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. ³⁰And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.

Glorified: Seated with Christ

Ephesians 2:4-7

⁴But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, ⁵made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. ⁶And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, ⁷in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.

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2. Justified IN OUR MISSION WITH CHRIST

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3. Justified FOR PRESENT STANDING IN GRACE

Romans 5:1-2

Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ² through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.

4. Justification BRINGS LIFE

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Message about Christ: Redemption from the dominion of sin

REDEMPTION

To buy back or secure the release of someone from captivity or slavery by payment of a ransom.— Jerry Bridges

OT Picture: Israelites redeemed from slavery in Egypt

Deuteronomy 15:15 Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and the LORD your God redeemed you.

Ex 19:4 ‘You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself.’

Ex 15:13 In your unfailing love you will lead the people you have redeemed. In your strength you will guide them to your holy dwelling.

Ps 130:8 O Israel, put your hope in the LORD, for with the LORD is unfailing love and with him is full redemption. ⁸ He himself will redeem Israel from all their sins.

Christ fulfills the Old Testament Picture.

- **What do we learn about redemption?**

Mark 10:45

1 Corinthians 6:19-20

1 Pet 1:18-19

Ephesians 1:7-8

Col 1:14

Rom 3:23-24

Galatians 3:14

Galatians 4:4-7

Hebrews 9:11-12

- **Redeemed** _____ **PURPOSE**

Titus 2:11-14

¹¹ For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. ¹² It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, ¹³ while we wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, ¹⁴ who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.

Future and Benefits of Redemption

1. **Eternal** _____

Ps 49:15

But God will redeem my life from the grave; he will surely take me to himself.

2. **Eternal** _____

Hebrews 9:15

Therefore he is the mediator of a new covenant, so that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, since a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions committed under the first covenant. Romans 8:17 Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

3. **Eternal** _____

Romans 8:22-23

²² We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. ²³ Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

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O Israel, put your hope in the LORD, for with the LORD is unfailing love and with him is full redemption. ⁸ He himself will redeem Israel from all their sins.

Christ fulfills the Old Testament Picture.**What do we learn about redemption?**

Mark 10:45

“For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

1 Corinthians 6:19-20

¹⁹ Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; ²⁰ you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.

1 Pet 1:18-19

¹⁸ For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, ¹⁹ but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.

Ephesians 1:7-8⁷ “In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace ⁸ that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding.”

Col 1:14

For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

Rom 3:23-24; Galatians 3:14; Galatians 4:4-7; Hebrews 9:11-12

Romans 3:23-24 (NIV)

²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

Galatians 3:14 (NIV)

¹⁴ He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit.

Galatians 4:4-7 (NIV)

⁴ But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, ⁵ to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons. ⁶ Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, “*Abba*, Father.” ⁷ So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir.

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Redeemed FROM WICKEDNESS, FOR GOD, TO DO GOOD**PURPOSE**

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Message about Repentance: What Jesus demands

"The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God is near. *Repent* and believe the good news!" Mark 1:15

"This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and *repentance* and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." Luke 24:46-47

"The gospel is a summons to faith and repentance. All who hear the gospel are summoned by God to *repent* and *believe*. "God commands all men every where to repent" Paul told the Athenians. Repentance and faith are rendered matters of duty by God's direct command, and hence impenitence and unbelief are singled out in the NT as most grievous sins. With these universal commands, go universal promises of salvation to all who obey them."

What is Repentance?

Read the following passages and come up with your own definition for repentance:

Luke 3:7-14 / Luke 19:1-9 / 2 Cor 7:8-11

Repentance:

Read the following quotes and consider how they shed light on what repentance is and is not:

"Repentance unto life...is a saving grace, whereby a sinner, out of a true sense of his sin, and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, doth, with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God, with full purpose of, and endeavor after, new obedience" *Westminster Shorter Catechism*, question 87

"The real difference between a Christian and a non-Christian is not their attitude towards sin...the difference is their attitude toward their good deeds. The Pharisee repents of sin, but the Christian repents of his or her 'righteousness' as well, seeing it not only as insufficient, but sinful itself, since it was done in order to save ourselves without Christ." Tim Keller, *The content of the Gospel*, p. 27

Repentance: an event or a lifestyle?

Reflect on the following quotations:

"When our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ, said 'Repent,' He called for the entire life of believers to be one of repentance" Martin Luther, *Ninety Five Theses*

"It (repentance) involves a continual turning motion, turning toward God, and turning away from the riot of other voices, other desires, other loves." We tend to use the word 'repentance' in its more narrow sense, for decisive moments of realization, conviction, confession, turning. But Luther uses the word in its wider, more inclusive sense. If we are living in Christ, we are living *from-to*. John Calvin put it in a similar way: "This restoration does not take place in one moment or one day or one year...In order that believers may reach this goal [the shining image of God], God assigns to them a race of repentance, which they are to run throughout their lives" The entire Christian life (including the more specific moments of repentance) follows a pattern of turning from other things and turning to the Lord.

David Pawlison, *Sex and the Supremacy of Christ*, p.83

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J.I. Packer, *Evangelism and the*

What is Repentance?

Read the following passages and come up with your own definition for repentance:

Luke 3:7-14— Fruit comes from repentance, share with those in need (greed), don't steal, don't cheat

Luke 19:1-9— gave possessions to poor, gave back 4x what he's cheated

2 Cor 7:8-11 godly repentance leads to turning, worldly is just sorrow

Repentance:

Repentance is heartfelt sorrow for sin, a renouncing of it, and a sincere commitment to forsake it and walk in obedience to Christ.

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Reflect on the following quotations:

"When our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ, said 'Repent,' He called for the entire life of believers to be one of repentance" Martin Luther, *Ninety Five Theses*

"It (repentance) involves a continual turning motion, turning toward God, and turning away from the riot of other voices, other desires, other loves." We tend to use the word 'repentance' in its more narrow sense, for decisive moments of realization, conviction, confession, turning. But Luther uses the word in its wider, more inclusive sense. If we are living in Christ, we are living *from-to*. John Calvin put it in a similar way: "This restoration does not take place in one moment or one day or one year...In order that believers may reach this goal [the shining image of God], God assigns to them a race of repentance, which they are to run throughout their lives" The entire Christian life (including the more specific moments of repentance) follows a pattern of turning from other things and turning to the Lord.

David Pawlison, *Sex and the Supremacy of Christ*, p.83

Intro

1. Read the top two verses—

What is repentance

2. Read the following passages and come up with a definition for repentance

- What was most striking to you in these passages

- In 2 Cor 7:8-11—how are worldly sorrow and Godly sorrow similar, and how are they different

3. Share definitions of repentance...Read definition of repentance...

- *looking at the top two verses, it is clear that repentance is apart of saving faith. Telling the people the need for faith in Christ, and yet not telling them to repent is only half of the gospel.*

- Why do you think it is so easy to leave this part of the Gospel message out?

4. Why does a Christian have to repent even from there good deeds?

5. Think personally, what have been the sins since you became a Christian that have been forsaken...share with those around you...

Repentance: event or lifestyle

6. Read the two quotes— what does Pawlison mean by a narrower sense of repentance, vs. a wider sense of repentance.

7. Read Matt 6:12— what implications does this have for the life of a believer...

8; Ps. 139:23-24— Pray this...

Message about Faith: What Jesus demands

"The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God is near. Repent and *believe* the good news!" Mark 1:15

"Faith is essentially the casting and resting of oneself and one's confidence on the promises of mercy which Christ has given to sinners, and on the Christ who gave those promises."

J.I. Packer, *Evangelism and the Sovereignty of God*, p. 70

What is Faith?

Read the following passages and list observations below look at what faith in Christ secures:

John 1:12, 3:16-18, 36; 5:24; 6:28-29 / Rom. 4:4-5 / Eph. 1:13, 2:8-9

Saving Faith: What it is and is not

Discuss the following questions and discuss what is involved in saving faith.

1. Is saving faith merely intellectually agreeing with the facts about Jesus being the Son of God and dying and rising from the dead? Why or why not?
2. Is saving faith merely trusting in God for general provision (financial difficulties, sickness etc.)? Why or why not?
3. Do you think saving faith always leads to good works? Why or why not?
4. Can you believe in Jesus Christ as Savior and not submit to him as Lord? Why or why not?

How do the following quotes shed light on your discussion

"To believe in Jesus Christ alone means that you must transfer your trust, that is your hope for forgiveness of sin and life with God, from what you have been trusting in to Jesus Christ alone and what He has done for you on the cross."

"We are saved by faith alone but the faith that saves is never alone."

Faith: a gift from God

Look up the following references and make observations about the source of Faith:

Acts 5:31:

Acts 13:48:

Acts 16:14:

Phil. 1:29:

2 Tim 2:24-26:

Discuss the ramifications of this as you consider your own faith, and you seek and pray for God to move in the hearts of others.

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"Faith is essentially the casting and resting of oneself and one's confidence on the promises of mercy which Christ has given to sinners, and on the Christ who gave those promises."

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Read the story of the rich young ruler (Luke 18:17-25), and discuss some of the following questions:

- Why do you think Jesus didn't answer his question with "just believe"? In other words, if Jesus says in John 6:29, the only work we do is to believe, then how come does he tell the rich young ruler to sell his possessions and follow Him, is Jesus contradicting himself...how does this work?
- Read the following quote and interact with how this relates to the rich young ruler:
"The real difference between a Christian and a non-Christian is not their attitude towards sin...the difference is their attitude toward their good deeds. The Pharisee repents of sin, but the Christian repents of his or her 'righteousness' as well, seeing it not only as insufficient, but sinful itself, since it was done in order to save ourselves without Christ." Tim Keller, *The content of the Gospel*, p. 27

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1. Turn the paper over, come up with a definition of faith
2. Story at Main Event, of the guy walking on the ceiling...fell through...sincerely wrong

Message about Faith

1. Turn over page, read two quotes and verse under intro

What is Faith

1. Split up, look at what Faith gets in
2. Don't have the rich young ruler in there

Saving Faith: What it is and is not

1. Talk about these in the groups
2. Many People today think they have saving faith because they believe that God exists or that Jesus lived, died and rose from the dead as the Son of God. Mere intellectual assent is not saving faith. You believe that there is one God. Good. Even the demons believe that and shudder." James 2:19 Matt 8:29—The demons cried out to Jesus, "What do you want with us, Son of God?"
3. General provision...commendable...not saving faith

Faith: a gift from God

- Break up in groups go over verses...
- How should this make you feel towards your faith...
- Pray for those who don't yet believe...pray God would move and use you...

Faith: a gift from God

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2 Tim 2:24-26:

Discuss the ramifications of this as you consider your own faith, and you seek and pray for God to move in the hearts of others.

We covered four major topics

1. God
2. Sin
3. Christ

Conversion (repentance and faith)

We broke these topics down into nine lessons

1. **God: His justice and mercy have been reconciled in Christ**

Exodus 34:6-7⁶ And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, "The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness,⁷ maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation."

Romans 3:21-26²¹ But now apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets,²² even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe; for there is no distinction;²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,²⁴ being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus;²⁵ whom God displayed publicly as a propitiation in His blood through faith. This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed;²⁶ for the demonstration, *I say*, of His righteousness at the present time, so that He would be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

God: He sent Christ to fix the sin problem and restore man's original purpose; to glorify God

God created us for his glory--"*Bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the ends of the earth,... whom I created for my glory*" (Isaiah 43:6-7) and we should live our lives to honor him--"*So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God*" (1 Corinthians 10:31). But all us have failed to glorify God as we should and so God sent Jesus to provide holiness to those who trust in him, therefore we have been restored to our original purpose; to glorify God--"*All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God and are justified freely by grace through the redemption that came by Christ*" (Romans 3:23).

3. **Sin: Sinful by our nature and objects of God's wrath**

Ephesians 2:1-3¹ As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins,² in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient.³ All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath.

4. **Sin: Idolatry is when something or someone is place higher in our affections than God**

Jeremiah 2:12-13¹² Be appalled at this, O heavens, and shudder with great horror," declares the LORD.¹³ "My people have committed two sins: They have forsaken me, the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water."

5. **Christ: As the Lamb of God who took away our sins by being sacrificed**

Isaiah 53:5-6⁵ But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.⁶ We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Hebrews 9:27-28²⁷ Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment,²⁸ so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.

6. **Christ: We have been made righteous and justified in God's sight through Christ**

- Micah 7:8-9⁸ Do not gloat over me, my enemy! Though I have fallen, I will rise. Though I sit in darkness, the LORD will be my light.⁹ Because I have sinned against him, I will bear the LORD's wrath, until he pleads my case and establishes my right. He will bring me out into the light; I will see his righteousness.

2 Corinthians 5:21 ²¹ God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

7. Christ: His redemption has purchased us out of slavery to sin and into communion with God

- Ephesians 1:7-8 ⁷ In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace ⁸ that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding.

Colossians 1:13-14 ¹³ For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

8. Conversion—Repentance: An initial act conversion and a lifestyle of turning away from sin and turning to God

- “Repentance unto life...is a saving grace, whereby a sinner, out of a true sense of his sin, and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, doth, with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God, with full purpose of, and endeavor after, new obedience” *Westminster Shorter Catechism*, question 87

“When our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ, said ‘Repent,’ He called for the entire life of believers to be one of repentance”
Martin Luther, *Ninety Five Theses*

9. Conversion—Faith: God draws us to trust in Christ alone for our salvation, which results in good deeds

- Acts 16:14 ¹⁴ One of those listening was a woman named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth from the city of Thyatira, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul's message.

- Romans 10:9-10 ⁹ That if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.

Hebrews 11:1 ¹ Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.

Questions:

1. What has impacted you the most during this study
2. What applications do you still want to make.
3. Draw a picture of elements of the gospel. Make a chart.